

The Host Country Area, Geography, and Climate

The island of Jamaica is perhaps best noted for its lush and scenic tropical beauty: the rugged spine of blue-green mountains rising to 7,400 feet; warm, clear Caribbean waters with exciting underwater reefs; and the picture-postcard north coast with its white-sand beaches.

Jamaica is the third-largest Caribbean island and lies nearly 600 miles south of Miami, Florida. The island is 146 miles long and 51 miles across at its widest point. Except for narrow coastal plains mainly on the island's south side, the landscape is one of sharp, crested ridges, unique "cockpit" formations, and deep, twisting valleys. Almost half the island is more than 1,000 feet above sea level. Some 50% of the island is used for agriculture, 40% is woodland, and the remaining 10% is divided between mining and urban areas.

Jamaica has about 120 rivers. Most flow to the coast from the central mountain ranges. Those on the north side tend to be shorter and swifter than those on the south side. Only one is navigable for more than a short distance.

Kingston, the capital, is on the southeast coast and has the world's seventh largest natural harbor. From sea level at city center, the terrain rises to 1,800 feet. The suburban residential areas of St. Andrew in the foothills of the mountains are slightly cooler than the rest of the city. Jamaica enjoys a favorable, though warm and humid, climate. Average temperatures are about 80° – 95°F May through September, and 70° – 85°F during the cooler months. The higher mountainous regions reach a low of 50°F in the cooler months. Northeast trade winds help maintain a feeling of relative comfort.

Temperature and rainfall are markedly affected by the changes in elevation and geography of the island. Rainfall varies from an annual average of 25 inches at the Kingston airport to an average of 250 inches at Blue Mountain Peak. Suburban residential areas of Kingston receive about 50 inches on the average. Rainfall is generally heaviest during April-May and October - November, though these are not rainy seasons in the tropical sense. Mildew is a problem during these months. Relative humidity in Kingston ranges from 63% in February to 86% in October.

Jamaica is in the earthquake and hurricane belts but has not had a disastrous earthquake since 1907, even though every year has a few tremors. In September 1988, the island was struck by Hurricane Gilbert, the first since The main force of the storm affected the entire island, especially the eastern coastal areas, and caused widespread damage, mainly to crops and vegetation, coastal properties, utilities, and roofs.

The island suffers from periodic droughts. The water situation in Kingston was improved dramatically by completion of the Blue Mountain Water Scheme. Occasional water shortages do occur, but the problem is relieved for most Mission personnel by water tanks, pumps, and filters provided through the General Service Office (GSO).

Jamaica has no dangerous wild animals. Black widow spiders and scorpions are present but rare. Many varieties of soft-bodied lizards and nuisance insects, particularly cockroaches, ants, and

termites, present some problems. Mosquitoes and houseflies are troublesome in the Kingston area. Grass ticks and fleas are also annoying to outside pets.

Jamaica has over 600 insect species as well as 250 bird species - 25 of which belong only to Jamaica. About 120 species of butterflies, including the world's largest (6" wingspan), are also found here. The island is especially noted for its fire- flies, otherwise known as blinkies or peenywaullies.

A profusion of flowering shrubs, trees, and cacti reflects Jamaica's great variation of climate and topography. Hundreds of im- ported plants are well established. Pimento or allspice is from an indigenous plant, and Jamaica is the world's largest producer. The ortanique, developed in Jamaica, is a cross between an orange and a tangerine. Jamaica also has over 200 species of native orchids, over 500 different ferns, more than 300 mosses, and many fungi.

POPULATION

Jamaica's population of 2.5 million, according to 1993 estimates, is distributed unevenly, with large, sparsely populated areas in the mountainous interior of the island. Kingston is the island's largest city, with an estimated population of 700,000 in the metropolitan area. Nearby Spanish Town, with 112,000 inhabitants, and Greater Portmore, with nearly 500,000, although in the adjacent parish of St. Catherine, are in effect extensions of the Kingston metropolitan area. Montego Bay, with a population of 85,500, is the largest urban concentration outside of the greater Kingston area.

A colorful, complex cultural heritage makes Jamaicans a unique people. Their society is multi racially integrated, and the term "Jamaican" does not carry a particular color connotation. Jamaica's population is about 90% African or mixed descent. The remaining 10% are chiefly European, Chinese, East Indian, and Lebanese.

Over 70% of the population is under 35 - the mean age is 18. The economic and emotional focus of the home is frequently the mother, as reflected by the title of Jamaican sociologist Edith Clarke's book, *My Mother Who Fathered Me*.

The language in Jamaica is English, but it varies from precise Oxford English to Jamaican patois. Because of differences in phraseology, inflection, and word usage, new arrivals may experience some difficulty in understanding Jamaican English, particularly on the telephone. Given time, most difficulties disappear. The exception is with patois, sometimes called Jamaican Creole. Understanding it takes time and attention.

While most Jamaicans speak standard English, patois is commonly encountered in dealings with street vendors, domestic helpers, and artisans. Most Jamaicans are familiar with the dialect, although few speak only patois. However, modern Jamaican theater includes much dialogue in rapid patois, which may be difficult to follow, even after extended exposure to it.

Religion is an important facet of the Jamaican character and a major stabilizing influence. Most Jamaicans are Christians, with Baptists now representing the largest single denomination. The Church of Jamaica, successor to the Church of England (Anglican) since the 1880s; Church of God;

and Roman Catholic Church have substantial followings. Many other denominations are also represented, including Moravians, Seventh-Day Adventists, Methodists, Presbyterians, and Latter-Day Saints (Mormons). There are also small Jewish, Muslim, and Hindu communities.

Also found are religious groups unique to Jamaica: the Revivalists, whose Afro-Christian blend of religion has a high trance-invoking emotional content, and the bearded, “dread locked” Rastifarians, who worship “Jah,” whose earthly representative was the late Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia.

Jamaican culture and traditions are largely African and British, but ties with North America are increasing. This is due primarily to the large number of Jamaicans who have lived in or visited the U.S. and Canada, the importance of North American tourists and the bauxite industry to the island’s economy, and the influence of U.S. television shows and media.

PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

Jamaica is an independent member of the British Commonwealth. The British Monarch is the Head of State and is represented by a Jamaican Governor General nominated by the Prime Minister. The government is based on the Westminster parliamentary system and has an elected 60 member House of Representatives and an appointed 21-member Senate. Since the early 1940s, the Jamaican political scene has been dominated by two closely matched political parties: the Jamaica Labor Party (JLP) and the People’s National Party (PNP). A third party, the National Democratic Movement (NDM), was formed in 1995 by former JLP chairman, Bruce Golding.

The government is elected for a 5-year term, but elections can be held earlier under certain circumstances. The ministries of government are directed by ministers selected from majority party members of the House and Senate and appointed by the Governor General, acting on the advice of the Prime Minister. An experienced though somewhat under-staffed civil service carries out governmental functions.

In the December 1997 general election, the PNP won a 50 to 10 majority in the House of Representatives. Jamaica’s Prime Minister is P.J. Patterson, leader of the PNP, who succeeded Michael Manley when he retired for health reasons in 1992. Edward Seaga, leader of the opposition JLP, was Prime Minister from 1980 to 1989. Legal institutions generally follow British practice. Cases are tried before an independent judiciary ranked in an ascending hierarchy of Petty Sessions Courts, Resident Magistrate Courts, Supreme Court, and Court of Appeal. Certain cases may be sent on appeal to the U.K. Privy Council for final determination.

The island is divided into three counties, which have no present-day functions. Within these counties are 14 parishes. Kingston and the suburban parish of St. Andrew are combined for administrative purposes into the Kingston and St. Andrew Corporation. Local government functions are handled by Parish Councils, which are to be elected every 3 years. They depend on support from the central government and can be dissolved if the national government believes parish affairs are being mismanaged.

CULTURE

Jamaica has long been noted for the richness and diversity of its culture and the quality of its artists. In the area of theater, the island has produced such notable actors as Madge Sinclair, the Honorable Louise Bennett-Coverley, and Charles Hyatt. A variety of plays can be seen daily in the capital city of Kingston. Jamaica has an international reputation in dance, especially through the National Dance Theater Company, which fosters the development of traditional dance forms. The country also has a high reputation for its many fine painters, sculptors, and writers. Music is another field in which Jamaica is well known, particularly for reggae, which has been made famous by singers such as the late Bob Marley.

ART & SCIENCE

Music. Jamaica's music is perhaps its most revealing form of folk expression. Frank, natural, and spontaneous, it springs from the soul of the people and often reflects historical circumstances. The songs record joys and sorrows, wit, philosophy of life, and religion.

Traditional Jamaican music is percussive, polyrhythmic, and repetitive. Vocals rely heavily on the call-and-response form, while drums control the accompanying dances. The major influences are evident in the structure and behavior of Jamaican melody and harmony: the older heritage of African music and rhythm and the more recent legacy of European religious and popular music, introduced over the centuries of British rule.

Popular music has steadily evolved over the last 20 years from mento to ska to reggae. Reggae has been internationally promoted through the late Rasta folk hero and international pop star, Bob Marley. Other prominent reggae artists include Jimmy Cliff, the late Dennis Brown, and the late Peter Tosh. Several Jamaicans also have gained international recognition in the fields of classical music and jazz; Curtis Watson and Monty Alexander are notable examples. The philosophy, doctrine, and music of the Rastafarians heavily influence reggae in instrumentation, lyrics, movement, and delivery. The latest musical movement is called "DJ music." Similar to American rap music, it relies heavily on rhythmic chanting and emphasizes experiences of inner-city youth. Other forms of popular music include "dance hall," "dub," and "soca," a form of meringue music heard primarily during Carnival celebrations.

Art. Jamaican art is varied and reveals no predominant cultural or ethnic influences except, perhaps, very stylized African motifs. Many of the established Jamaican painters and sculptors have achieved acclaim outside this country, particularly in the U.S. and Britain, where many of them were trained. Sophisticated works can be obtained in various media: oils, acrylics, watercolors, silk-screen prints, woodcuts, sculpture, ceramics, pottery, and textile arts. There is a fairly large group of expatriate artists—mostly from the U.S. and the Commonwealth—resident in Jamaica. Kingston is the art center of the island, with many artists, the art school, and several well-respected high-quality galleries. Three broad categories of art are discernible: intuitive, abstract, and representational. Representational is the dominant mode. The National Gallery of Art maintains a large collection of Jamaican and Caribbean art from the 18th century to the present.

Crafts. Local craft work is strongly influenced by cultural heritage and finds expression in straw, semiprecious stones and jewelry, wood, clay, fabric, shell, and bamboo. A substantial amount of the alabaster, embroidered cutwork, and applique craft work is exported to the U.S. An attractive cluster of craft shops is located on the grounds of Devon House, an historic site.

Dance. The National Dance Theater Company (NDTC) was formed in 1962. Many of the troupe's more recognized members studied in England and the United States. The NDTC emphasizes indigenous dance and experimentation. NDTC choreographers have produced an extremely varied and culturally rich repertoire. The revived folk dances are actively performed on the island. They are presented at cultural festivals, on TV, and in resort areas.

Drama. Drama has expanded considerably in the past decade. During the 1980s, Jamaican playwrights typically produced works based on social currents and issues of the day. Today, the theater offers a broad base, ranging from comedy and reviews to serious drama.

Festivals. Jamaica places much emphasis on the cultural heritage of its people. The artistic and cultural awakening has been accompanied by a keen search for roots in folk forms based chiefly in colorful and intensely rhythmic dances and songs. This is best reflected in the annual festival celebrated from the last two weeks in July until Independence Day, the first Monday in August. Winners of "all island" parish dance, song, poetry, and drama competitions perform during the festival. Other high-profile festivals include the Ocho Rios Jazz Festival, the Reggae Sunsplash Festival, and Carnival. Festivals provide an avenue of expression for Jamaicans at every level of society.

Science. Organized scientific investigation in Jamaica dates back to 1774 when the Botanical Department and the gardens at Bath were established. The Institute of Jamaica—which includes the West Indies Reference Library, the National Gallery of Jamaica, and several museums—is the most significant cultural organization in the country. Its Natural History Division is the chief source of information on Jamaican flora and fauna. The Institute also produces publications on Jamaican history and culture. Perhaps one of the most active units of the Institute is the Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts where students are instructed in dance, drama, music, and the fine arts. Systematic geological surveys began over 100 years ago. In 1942, with the realization of the potential of bauxite, extensive research began, which led to the creation of a separate Geological Department in 1951.

Important areas of scientific research include geology, mineralogy, biochemistry, food technology, nutrition, agro-industry, crop and soil agronomy, epidemiology, ecology, and marine biology.

The Meteorological Office of the Jamaican Government and the Seismic Research Unit of the University of the West Indies compile and disseminate information to the public.

COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

Jamaica's pattern of trade and production has historically been based on the export of its principal agricultural products (sugar, bananas, coffee, cocoa, spices, etc.), as well as other foreign exchange

earners (bauxite/ alumina, rum) in exchange for imports of oil, machinery, manufactured goods, and food products (principally wheat, corn, rice, soybeans, butter). However, the fast growth of tourism, textile production, and the proliferation of service industries have changed the island's trading habits.

Tourism has been Jamaica's primary foreign exchange-earning industry since 1983. Total visitor arrivals have remained well over one million annually. Stopover visitors (visitors staying one night or more) average 65% of total arrivals, two-thirds of which come from the U.S. Hotel room capacity on the island is 22,715 and is expanding.

In 1998, total foreign exchange earnings from tourism accounted for an estimated US\$1.2 billion. The second largest source of foreign exchange in 1998 was remittances (approximately US\$600 million).

Jamaica has large commercial deposits of mineral resources such as limestone (two-thirds of the island), bauxite, gypsum, marble, silica sand, and clays. The mining and processing of bauxite continue to be the major economic activity. Net export earnings from bauxite/alumina (levies, royalties, local cash inflows) amounted to US\$333 million in 1998. Development of this industry is greatly influenced by worldwide aluminum consumption and price fluctuations in the international market.

The agricultural sector generates about 8 percent of GDP and employs about one-quarter of Jamaica's work force. Jamaica has a favorable climate and varied soil types. Major traditional export crops are sugar, spices, bananas, coffee, citrus, all-spice, and pimento. Other crops of growing importance include yams, tropical fruits and vegetables, legumes, and horticulture. Other nontraditional products have also strengthened Jamaica's export performance during the last few years. These include garments, cut flowers, ornamental plants, gourmet food items and spices, handicrafts, and furniture. World-renowned Jamaican products such as Blue Mountain coffee, cigars, and Red Stripe beer have experienced growth in demand. The U.S. continues to be Jamaica's leading trading partner, exporting an average of US\$1.52 billion annually to Jamaica and importing approximately US\$498 million worth of Jamaican goods during the 1996–98 period. Jamaica's other leading trading partners are the U.K., Canada, Venezuela, Trinidad & Tobago and Japan. The Jamaican economy suffered its third consecutive year of negative growth (0.7 percent) in 1998, following a contraction of 2.1 percent in 1997 and 1.8 percent in 1996. All sectors excepting bauxite/alumina, energy and tourism shrank in 1998. This reduction in aggregate demand and output is the result of the government's continued tight macro - economic policies and the weakness in the financial sector affecting investor confidence. In part, the government's policies to stabilize the economy have been successful. Inflation has fallen from 25 percent in 1995 to 7.9 percent in 1998. Through periodic intervention in the market, the central bank also prevented any abrupt drop in the average exchange rate.

The Jamaican dollar declined from an average of 35.58 in 1997 to 36.68 to the U.S. dollar in 1998. However, the exchange rate has been slipping since the beginning of 1999, resulting in an average exchange rate of J\$ 40.56 to US\$ 1.00 during mid-December 1999. Jamaica faces several ongoing economic problems. Although the external debt has been modestly reduced over the last 3 years,

debt servicing still constitutes about 62% of the government fiscal budget, constraining both growth and the government's policy options. The stock of debt is approximately US\$6.6 billion domestic and foreign. Privatization, tariff reform, liberalization of foreign exchange controls, and tight fiscal and monetary policies are some of the major policies implemented over the past few years to enhance economic growth and development.

TRANSPORTATION

Automobiles. A car is a necessity for most staff members in Jamaica. Since it is expensive to purchase a car in Jamaica, you should bring one with you. Many families find it necessary to bring a second car for the spouse. Officers with diplomatic privileges may import a second car duty free, but they must pay all shipping costs. Driving is on the left, but either left-hand- or right-hand-drive cars may be imported. Left-hand-drive cars should have headlights re-aimed. Because of the narrow roads and in the interest of safety, consideration should be given to bringing a right-hand- drive vehicle.

Current Jamaican Government policy forbids the importation of vehicles over three (3) years old (date of manufacture to date of entry into Jamaica). No exceptions can be made to this policy.

Compact cars rather than larger American model cars are better suited to the narrow, winding Jamaican roads. A car with a high road clearance is an advantage because of the many potholes. Many employees bring sport utility vehicles because of the road conditions. Lighter colors are preferable as they are cooler. An air-conditioner is a must. Garages can service most American, Japanese, or European makes, but service is more expensive and below U.S. standards. Spare parts can usually be obtained locally but parts may be obtained from Miami with delivery in only a few days. Bring a basic supply of oil filters, radiator hoses, fan belts, and spark plugs, as well as points and condensers if your car uses them. Also, bring a basic tool supply and repair manuals for your make and model of car. Durable tires in good condition are necessary because of often poorly kept roads. Shipment of spare tires in your household effects should be considered. Embassy employees who purchase gasoline at public service stations must obtain receipts if they wish to claim reimbursement of Jamaican gasoline taxes. Refunds are requested monthly through the Administrative Office. Unleaded gasoline is widely available. You must have a Jamaican license to drive. Licenses may be obtained through the GSO section without examination by presenting a valid American or international license. All adult family members of diplomatic personnel should have a U.S. drivers license before coming to Jamaica. Prior MFA approval must be obtained for importation of all POV's prior to shipment.

Automobile registration is accomplished by obtaining (1) an import license for your car at the time of importation, (2) compulsory local liability insurance, and (3) a certificate of vehicle fitness. Embassy officers obtain registration plates gratis.

Certificates of car fitness must be renewed annually. Besides being in good condition, all cars must have turn indicators. Those on U.S. cars are acceptable. Personnel should discuss all automobile purchases and imports with the GSO. Tandem couples not on the diplomatic list should be aware that they may import only one automobile.

Before selling a car, permission must be obtained from the Jamaican Government through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Customs duties based on the car's assessed value at the time of sale must be paid. Vehicles may be sold without payment of customs duties after the vehicle has been on the island for more than 3 years. Proceeds from sale of a personal vehicle may be converted through the Budget and Fiscal Office at the exchange rate applicable to official Embassy transactions.

Transportation to and from work may be provided for persons whose cars have not yet arrived. Jamaica Union of Taxi Drivers Association (JUTA) cabs, found at the major hotels and airports, are generally reputable and reliable.

COMMUNICATIONS

Telephone and Telegraph. Telephone service is available to most of the island, but service is below U.S. standards. Calls from one exchange to another are treated as long-distance calls despite relatively short distances, with rates determined by the mileage between exchanges. Local long-distance charges are less than the same type of charges in the U.S.

A direct-dialing system serves the whole island. Service to the U.S. by satellite is generally adequate.

Calling cards can be used from Embassy phones and currently a rate of \$0.08 per minute is available. CLO keeps applications for these calling cards on file. U.S. long-distance companies offer collect-call services from Jamaica. Direct-dialing from the U.S. is possible using area code 876 and the Jamaican seven-digit number. International telegraph service is good, and rates are moderate. Cables are sent via JAMINTEL Limited through the Jamaican postal service. Local service and delivery are erratic.

Mail and Pouch. Local airmail service is available to and from the U.S. Transit time to Washington or New York is about 10 days, with some fluctuations in service. The airmail letter rate to the U.S. is J\$1.10 per ounce. Surface mail and international parcel post depend on sailing schedules to Jamaica and are unreliable. Delivery time from the U.S. varies from 2 to 6 months. International letter mail service ranges from excellent to disastrous, while local mail can disappear or take weeks to travel a few miles. Pouch mail (letters) is all by air, with transit time varying from 10 days to 4 weeks or longer. Personal letters, flat mail under 2 pounds, and clearly marked emergency items needed for health and welfare should be addressed as follows:

Name

3210 Kingston Place

Department of State

Washington, DC 20521

Packages may not exceed 40 pounds in weight or 24 inches in length, or 62 inches in length and girth combined. Articles prohibited by U.S. postal regulations may not be sent through Department of State facilities. In addition, liquids, aerosols, plants, corrosives (acids), perishables, explosives, firearms, narcotics or dangerous drugs not prescribed by a U.S. physician, glass, and other fragile articles are prohibited. Only letter mail, exposed film, video cassette cartridges and letter tapes as

well as authorized merchandise returns may be sent from post to the U.S. The U.S. Postal Service (USPS) prohibits the registration, certification, or insurance of mail entered into the USPS for pouch transmission to post. Please notify all correspondents and mail-order houses to comply with this regulation to prevent mail from being returned to them. Jamaica is served by United Parcel Service, Federal Express, and D.H.L. Worldwide Express.

Radio and TV. AM and FM radio reception in the Kingston area is excellent. There are several major national radio networks, including RJR Limited, Jamaica's oldest station. In 1997, state-owned Jamaica Broadcasting Corporation (JBC) was sold to RJR. Radio stations offer a wide variety of programming, including music, talk shows, local and international news, and religious programs. TV/J (which was initially JBC-TV) has operated as TV station since 1963. TV/J transmits Jamaican, U.S., English, and Canadian programs. A privately owned station, CVM-TV, broadcasts many popular American sitcoms and movies. Both stations offer regular local and overseas news programs. As a result of recent legislation governing cable-TV service, a wide variety of cable programming is now available through several local cable providers. Rates are comparable to those in the U.S. U.S. -made TV sets can be used in Jamaica. Video rental stores can be found in Kingston, and most post personnel have a VCR. The vast majority of available tapes are VHS, not Betamax. Ordering of VCRs and color TVs can be done through the commissary at U.S. retail price plus transportation. There are now almost 20,000 satellite dishes in Jamaica that receive the whole range of U.S. television offerings. Many Embassy personnel have access to a satellite dish, and it is possible to purchase a satellite system locally. Short-wave reception from the U.S. and U.K. is fair to good with occasional interference; some people find a short-wave set desirable. Voice of America short-wave broadcasts get good reception in early morning and evening and have excellent news and sports coverage. Operation of CB/single side-band radios is popular with some Mission personnel, because of ease in communicating with stations in North America. "Skips" also bring in Central and South America, Mexico, Canada, and other Caribbean islands. Ground plane antennas have proved satisfactory; larger antennas give more scope. Licensed amateur radio operators are given permission to operate their stations in Jamaica. Bring a valid license and all CB radios and equipment, antennas, and other accessories to post as they are not available in Jamaica.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals The *Miami Herald* and the *New York Times* are usually available at local newsstands late on the day of publication. Limited international coverage is provided by the *Daily Gleaner*, the *Herald*, and the *Observer*, Jamaica's three main newspapers. Copies of these papers are usually available for perusal at the Jamaica Desk (WHA/ CAR) in the Department of State. English and American magazines are available locally. American magazines are marked up at least 30%. Subscriptions to U.S. magazines will save money. Send them by pouch, if you don't mind them arriving at least 2 weeks late and occasionally in batches of two or three. Subscriptions to the international editions of *Time* or *Newsweek* will ensure that the magazine arrives during the week of publication. Books printed in England are available from several booksellers. U.S. bestsellers are months late arriving at local shops and difficult to find. Books cost more than in the U.S. The Public Affairs section of the Embassy has a Library that houses approximately 480 volumes, ranging from art to technology and the social sciences, as well as general reference works. The library also subscribes to 20 American periodicals. The Kingston and St. Andrew Parish Library is part of the island wide free public library service. It has about 75,000 volumes.

HEALTH AND MEDICINE

Medical Facilities. A health and medical information sheet is revised annually and includes a list of local doctors. General practitioners and specialists are available. Many have received specialty training in the U.S., Canada, or Britain. These doctors are highly qualified and good diagnosticians even without the benefit of sophisticated equipment. Fees are generally lower than those in the U.S., particularly in the specialty areas. There are many good dentists whose fees are also lower than those in the U.S. Many professionals have migrated to the U.S., and in several specialty areas it is sometimes difficult to get appointments quickly. Several small and generally adequate private hospitals are found in and around Kingston. People go to the U.S. for special treatment or surgery. Local doctors recommend trips to the U.S. if they believe their own facilities are inadequate. The regional medical officer, who visits Kingston every 4 to 6 months, has stated that no elective surgery should be done in Jamaica. Miami is the designated medical evacuation point. The Health Unit is open part-time during the week and is staffed by a registered nurse who is equipped to treat minor health problems and injuries and to give immunizations. She is on call 24 hours for emergencies; she can also make referrals to doctors if necessary. Special medications are sometimes difficult to find, so please bring at least a 6-month supply.

Community Health Community sanitation in Kingston has improved in the past few years. Drains and plumbing are inspected sporadically. Insects are a constant nuisance, and there is not a regular spraying program to control the breeding grounds. Trash and garbage disposal in the urban areas has also improved. In the rural areas it is an individual matter. Sewage facilities and treatment are adequate in Kingston.

Preventive Measures Jamaica has no serious endemic diseases likely to affect Mission personnel. Some infectious diseases are influenza, whooping cough, scarlet fever, and German measles. It is now mandatory for students entering school for the first time to have documents verifying that they have been immunized against whooping cough, tetanus, diphtheria, measles, polio, and tuberculosis before admission is approved. U.S. Mission children are exempt from the tuberculosis inoculation. Rabies, yellow fever, and malaria are not present in Jamaica, but mosquitoes do transmit the unpleasant dengue fever. Cases of dengue fever rose in late 1998, but the problem is being addressed through aerial spraying and reduction of mosquitoes' breeding areas. Quality pasteurized milk is available in Kingston. The commissary will order U.S.-origin milk and dairy products, but they are expensive. Excessive exercise should be avoided during the heat of the day. Because of the large areas of dense foliage and high pollen levels, the climate can be unpleasant to asthma and sinus sufferers.

EMPLOYMENT FOR FAMILY MEMBERS

Employment opportunities in the community can be found. Several positions in the Mission have been designated AFM (American Family Member) positions. Part-time intermittent temporary (PIT), secretarial positions, and a few contract positions also exist. The post also has positions for a nurse and part-time Community Liaison Officer. The AKRA commissary hires a full-time manager and other staff. Family members interested in employment are encouraged to send a resume and/or SF-171 to the Community Liaison Office (CLO), who will circulate it among the Mission

sections. Various opportunities exist outside the Embassy. Volunteer opportunities are available in areas such as social work, teaching, and literacy training. A U.S. Jamaica bilateral agreement allows dependents to work without a work permit following submission of a diplomatic note to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Several people are employed as teachers, and other areas of employment are possible within the business community but require a job search. Salaries are generally very low by U.S. standards. Employees must pay Jamaican taxes, which are substantial, and they must waive their diplomatic immunity in relation to their work.

KINGSTON

The destruction of Port Royal by an earthquake in 1692 led to the settlement of Kingston to the north across the harbor. So rapid was growth that by 1703 it was declared by law the chief seat of trade and head port on the island. In 1872, it became the island's capital. After 1911, internal migration began to focus on Kingston, which led to the continuing trend toward movement from the countryside to principal urban areas. Kingston is now the largest English-speaking city in the Americas south of Miami. Kingston is spread along the low coastal area surrounded by picturesque mountains. It is a bustling, sprawling city of striking contrasts. Typical of large cities, Kingston has areas of modern homes set in lovely gardens as well as sections of slums. The government is attempting to replace the "tin shanties" of the slums with low-cost housing developments. The better suburban residential areas are close to several fairly modern shopping areas, which include supermarkets, drug stores, dry cleaners, small specialty shops, movie theaters, and boutiques. The modern-day Port Royal, beyond the airport and across the harbor from Kingston, is considered one of the more valuable archeological sites in the Western Hemisphere. It was known as one of the richest and most wicked cities in the world before the 1692 earthquake, which plunged much of this buccaneer capital into the sea. Several old buildings are still standing, and there is an excellent museum. Restoration and an underwater archeological project are under way. Kingston itself has several interesting old houses as well as galleries, museums, and other places to visit. The city features panoramic views of the mountains or the sea from nearly any point and offers many opportunities for an enjoyable tour.

American Embassy Kingston

The Post and Its Administration. The Embassy occupies four floors in an 11-story office building owned by the ex-Mutual Life Assurance Society and located at 2 Oxford Road in New Kingston. It includes offices for State, Foreign Commercial Service, FAS, MLO, Defense Attache's Office (DAO), and Drug Enforcement Agency operations. USAID is located nearby at 2 Haining Road. The Consular Section is located on one floor in the Life of Jamaica Building at 16 Oxford Road, about two blocks from the Chancery. The Peace Corps Director and staff are located about 1 mile from the Embassy at 1A Holborn Road. There are U.S. Consular Agencies in Montego Bay and the Cayman Islands.

The Community Liaison Office is an important resource for employees and their family members. The CLO coordinator offers new employees and their families a personal contact at the post before arrival. Employees and family members are encouraged to call the CLO coordinator before coming.

The Consular Section, staffed by 12 officers and 30 Jamaican employees, is one of the busiest in the world. During FY1999, the section processed 11,480 immigrant visa and 127,189 nonimmigrant visa applications. A total of 115 U.S. citizens were arrested, almost all of them for narcotics violations.

USAID/Jamaica's development assistance program addresses strategic objectives in four sectors: economic growth, environmental management, health and education while a special "Inner city" objective addresses problems in the depressed neighborhoods of downtown Kingston. USAID/Jamaica is also responsible for implementation of initiatives under the \$30million Caribbean Regional Program (CRP). Regional initiatives are focused under economic growth, environment, and rule of law. Overall strategic leadership, administration, and financial accountability of these programs are ensured by the nine career Foreign Service Officers who are ably assisted by some 73 locally and off-shore hired staff (the majority of which are Cooperating Country Nationals). This workforce is organized within three technical and three support offices. USAID/Jamaica's Controller and Executive Offices provide full range of financial administrative support services in-house. Since 1962 USAID has provided over \$1.5 billion in economic assistance to Jamaica and is the principal donor of grant funds for improvement of environmental management systems, coastal zone management, HIV prevention, and adolescent reproductive health. Funding sources included development assistance and economic support funds. The projected budget for USAID Jamaica in FY 2000 is \$11.7 in the bilateral program and \$7.0 million for the Caribbean Regional Program. The Peace Corps program in Jamaica is one of the world's oldest. Jamaica was the eighth country to receive Peace Corps Volunteers in 1962. Since then, over 3,275 Peace Corps Volunteers have served in Jamaica without interruption. Peace Corps Jamaica's 100 Volunteers today work in Environmental Education, Youth-At-Risk, and Water Sanitation programs.

Housing. The U.S. Government owns the Ambassador's residence and two other houses. All other residential units are leased. The Ambassador's residence is located on a 3.6-acre lot 6 miles from the Embassy. The two-floor house has three bedrooms and four baths, a study, and terraces on each floor. There are living quarters and a kitchen for up to six domestic employees. The property also has a separate two-bedroom guest house, a pool, and a two-car garage. The DCM's residence was leased in 1995 and is located on a 1.7-acre lot in the hills 5 miles from the Embassy. The house has four bedrooms, a study, four baths and includes quarters for up to three domestic employees. The property also has a pool, two-car garage, and a lighted tennis court. Most agencies, including State, participate in the Embassy housing pool, which consists mainly of short-term leased townhouses and houses. USAID has a separately managed pool of similar short-term leased units. All Mission housing is located in several contiguous neighborhoods located from 2 to 6 miles from the Embassy and USAID. Maximum one-way driving time to the most distant short-term leases during rush hour was about 50 minutes in 1999. Arriving personnel are assigned to permanent housing by the Inter-Agency Housing Board before their arrival. If the assigned residence has not yet been vacated, as often happens during the summer transfer season, new arrivals may be temporarily assigned to another leased housing unit for several weeks. As of January 2000, the majority of residential units in the housing pool were townhouses. In the future virtually all arriving employees will be assigned townhouses to provide employees and their families a secure living environment. Leased townhouses are modest in size and normally contain three bedrooms, two or three bathrooms, a living room, kitchen, dining area, and patio area. Many units have a bedroom and bathroom for a

domestic employee, a laundry room, a carport, and sometimes a den. Closets are usually small, and additional storage rooms are rare. Some townhouse complexes have small swimming pools. Most townhouses have very small private garden areas. Gardening tools are not provided by the Embassy, so you may wish to bring a mower and a few basic tools. All residences have security grills on windows and on any doors that don't meet rigid standards. All residences are also equipped with alarm systems. Townhouse complexes have perimeter walls or fences and 24-hour security guards at entrance gates. The Embassy's contracted security firm provides security services to all residences. Because of the tropical climate, some types of fabrics, leathers, book bindings, and certain metals may be affected by mildew or corrosion. It may be wise to put these items of value into storage rather than bring them to post.

Furnishings(State, USAID, DAO)Residences are furnished according to their size, the availability of appropriate furniture in stock, and the number in the family. Appliances provided include:1 refrigerator, 1 washing machine, 1 freezer, 1 dryer, 1 range (gas or electric), 1 emergency generator (where necessary), and air-conditioners for occupied bedrooms. Note: Department of Defense and DEA personnel should contact their agencies regarding provision of appliances, furniture, and furnishings. Draperies for the living room, dining room, and occupied bedrooms are provided by the employing agency, in accordance with their drapery policies and budgetary restraints.

Utilities and Equipment. Electric service in Kingston is fair, with sporadic power outages. AC current is 110v, 50 cycles (the U.S. standard is 110v,60 cycles). Some residences are also equipped with 220v, 50-cycle current for heavy appliances. Many U.S. -made appliances function satisfactorily on 50-cycle current, but electric clocks, tape recorders, and some other equipment may not. Frequent voltage fluctuations sometimes damage electrical equipment. Bring surge protectors for sensitive electronic equipment, and UPS for your computer.

Food. Supermarkets and small specialty shops in Kingston have a wide variety of meats, fruits, vegetables, and canned goods. The better quality shops and markets inspect their meat, but no government inspection is required. Prices are usually two to three times higher than those in the U.S. for all cuts of standard quality meats. Some American-type cuts of beef and pork are available. Fresh and frozen fish, lobster, and shrimp are available seasonally but are usually expensive and the quality is below U.S. standards. Vegetables range from tropical to standard fare and are available year round. Choices include white Irish potatoes (no baking), sweet potatoes, yams, beets, green beans, leaf lettuce, eggplant, green peppers, chilies, avocados, onions, scallions, celery, carrots, cucumbers, corn, tomatoes, varieties of pumpkin (squash), and several local varieties of vegetables. Quality is often below U.S. standards, and prices are moderately high, especially for potatoes and onions. Fruits are also seasonal, with oranges, tangerines, grapefruit, limes, papaya, watermelon, mango, guava, pineapple, bananas, plantains, and other good local fruits available. Prices range from reasonable to high, although quality is good. All fruits and vegetables should be washed well before eating. The American Kingston Recreation Association (AKRA) operates a small commissary(open to all U.S. Direct Hire Americans and their dependents) that stocks basic household supplies and foodstuffs, cigarettes, alcoholic beverages, wine, beer, canned soft drinks, and frozen foods including meat. Prices are considerably higher than those in the U.S. Because of the limited product line, plan to bring any specialty food items to post. A deposit of US\$150 single and US\$300 family, refundable on departure, is required for commissary membership. Purchases are made by check

drawn on a U.S. bank or cash. The commissary has an arrangement with a forwarder in Miami, whereby certain items too large or heavy for the pouch(auto tires and parts, etc.) may be purchased to accompany food shipments. Also, food items not ordinarily carried by the commissary, if available from their lists(i.e., baby food, name brand canned goods, etc.), may be ordered in case lots. Bring at least one large cooler chest for transporting frozen goods.

Clothing. Clothing suitable for men and women in southern Florida, southern California, and Hawaii is appropriate for Kingston. Most necessary items for men, women, and children are expensive and can be difficult to find. A limited selection of lightweight fabrics is available but bring your own patterns as local ones are expensive and scarce. A few hard-to-find dressmakers can make dresses. Ready-made clothing is sold, and prices are usually very high. Careful shopping can produce good results. Bring a good supply of shoes, especially for women and children. These are hard to find in the right size, and quality is below U.S. standards. Imported shoes are available but are expensive. For possible trips to cooler climates or the U.S. , include some warm clothing. Also bring blue jeans, sports clothes, slacks, and a pullover if you like mountain holidays. American-style sportswear is worn here. Long patio dresses are worn, but short sun dresses are popular for informal evening wear. For men, sport shirts (without a tie) and slacks are acceptable at many social functions. Drip-dry fabrics are ideal but are expensive here. Due to the climate and need for frequent laundering, elastic deteriorates rapidly. A dark business suit will suffice on most occasions. A tuxedo for men is rarely required. Men should bring a supply of lightweight suits. Regular suits or the safari/bush type with short sleeves (depending on your job responsibilities) is appropriate for the office. Women need clothes suitable for offices in the U.S. Stockings are not usually worn but are optional. Five or six less formal dinner dresses are necessary for women. Long or short dresses are worn to cocktail parties and buffet dinners. For the infrequent cool evenings, sweaters or light evening wraps, depending on the function attended, will suffice. Men need only a lightweight tropical suit, even for the coolest Kingston weather. Bring one sweater for wear at the office, as the air-conditioned environment can be quite cool at times. Children wear typical play clothing, particularly shorts and T-shirts, tennis shoes, and sandals.

SUPPLIES AND SERVICES.

Supplies. The AKRA commissary stocks basic household supplies. Bring your favorite cosmetics and toiletries, as well as prescription medications.

Basic Services: The quality of dry cleaning is poor and extremely expensive. It is recommended to bring the new home dry-cleaning kits to post (Dryel). Barbershops are generally adequate and less expensive than those in the U.S. Beauty shops are nearly up to U.S. standards and charge U.S. prices, however, mani and pedicures are much lower than in the U.S. Radio, watch, camera, electrical, and mechanical repairs are not up to U.S. standards; complex repairs are undertaken at your risk. Repair costs may be high, and spare or replacement parts are often not available. Bring only electrical and mechanical equipment that is in good working order.

Domestic Help. “Helper,” not “maid,” is the term used by Jamaicans and foreigners alike for domestic help on the island. Most Jamaican helpers are female. Most types of household help are available, although reliable, well-trained workers, especially cooks and gardeners, may be difficult

to find. Most personnel have or share at least one helper, in addition to drivers, gardeners, and other workers. The Jamaican legal minimum wage is low, and most U.S. personnel pay more generous salaries. The standard pay for a day worker in an Embassy home, for instance, ranges from J\$600 to J\$800 per day, with average weekly salaries (40-hour maximum workweek) of J\$2,500 to \$3,000. Various arrangements are made for helpers' food, bus fare, and lodging. Helpers' daily hours are not rigidly set, and various schedules can be arranged to suit your family needs. Gardeners are generally competent but are hard on American lawnmowers and tools. If uniforms are desired, employers must furnish them. Once a year each helper is given 2 weeks' vacation with pay. In some cases, a helper is given quarters and lives in. Helpers and employers are required to make modest weekly payments to the National Insurance Scheme, the Jamaican social security system. Payments for hospitalization or unemployment are not required, though often made by the employer. If a helper who has been employed at least 4 weeks is discharged without cause, two weeks' severance pay is required. Although local custom is not strongly established on this point, the employer should pay the costs of some medical services for a helper in case of sickness or injury. Public hospitals provide a wide range of free services, although receiving them can be time consuming. The regional medical officer strongly recommends that domestic help have medical exams at least once a year.

Religious Activities. Most major faiths are found in Jamaica. A partial list of denominations in Kingston includes Anglican, Baptist, Friends(Quaker), Jewish, Methodist, Mormon(Latter-Day Saints), Presbyterian/Congregational, Roman Catholic, and Seventh-Day Adventist. All services are in English.

Education Dependent Education at Post

American International School Of Kingston, AISK was founded in 1994 to meet the growing demands for a school which would offer quality education that more closely follows the U.S. curriculum and style of education. It is a candidate for accreditation from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). Class size is small(no more than 16 students per class), allowing for more individual attention. Twenty-one Mission children attended AISK in 1999 – 2000. The school at present leases two properties that are situated at Bamboo Pen, grounds owned by the Embassy. During the 1999 – 2000 school year, the faculty is predominantly American and Jamaican with an overseas-recruited Director. AISK offers a school of up to 150 students, with individual classes and teachers for grades pre-kindergarten through 6th. The upper grades, 7-12, are divided into individual classes for grades 7, 8, 9 and 10 and a combined class for grades 11 and 12, though these arrangements are subject to change depending on the size of the student body in the upper school. Over the past three years, AISK has been phasing out its participation in the accredited independent study program offered by the University of Nebraska. Facilities include a new science lab, a library configuration that includes separate libraries for the lower grades (pre-kindergarten through 6) and upper grades(7-12), totaling over 5,000 volumes. A modern computer lab with CD-ROM and access to the Internet is available to students. There is a small pool on the grounds and play-ground equipment at the lower school. Because of the small class size, there is an emphasis on hands-on learning, and students may learn according to their own needs. The curriculum for all grades includes music, art and PE. Spanish and French is offered to students beginning in the third grade. The school emphasizes the development of the individual student. The goal of the school at all levels is to help students achieve their highest potential.

American International School of Kingston (AISK)

Principal: Eugene Vincent,

6 Bamboo Avenue,

Kingston 6,

Jamaica

Tel: (876) 977-3625

e-mail at AISK@cwjamaica.com

c/o American Embassy/Kingston,

3210 Kingston Place,

Department of State,

Washington, DC 20521

Hillel Academy

Hillel Academy, founded in 1969, is located in a high-income residential area at the foothills of St. Andrew on land donated by the Jamaican government. Although the Jamaican Jewish community provided the initial funding for the School's physical plant and continues to offer its strong support, Hillel Academy is an independent, co-educational, non-denominational school. It provides a continuing educational program from pre-kindergarten to Grade 12 in two separate schools - each with its own Principal and corresponding teaching staff - both of which are under the general direction and guidance of a Director with supporting administrative staff. Recently accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools(SACS), Hillel Academy is currently the only fully accredited school in the country. Its student body is currently composed of 585 students from diverse cultural backgrounds - the Caribbean, Europe, North and South-America, and the Middle and Far East. During the 1999-2000 school year, approximately one third of the official dependents of Mission employees are enrolled at Hillel Academy. At the high school level, an optional American curriculum has recently been started and will run alongside the traditional British-based education. The curriculum at the Lower School is closely linked to that of U.S. schools. Beginning in pre-K and continuing through grade 12, students experience a literature-based reading and writing program. Hands-on activities are offered in science and math, while the study of history, geography, Spanish, French, computers, art, music, drama and physical education ensure a well rounded education for each student. In addition, the Academy also offers a learning support system for children with learning difficulties. Martial arts, ballet and modern dance - to mention only a few - are offered as after-school activities. Hillel's student teacher ratio in pre-K to grade 6 is 25: 1; teachers' assistants assigned in pre-K through grade 4 ensure that students receive individual attention as needed. The ratio in grades 7-11 is 18: 1. The campus extends over 8 acres and includes an impressive physical plant: 29 classrooms; 3 fully equipped science laboratories; a computer laboratory with Internet and e-mail accessibility; a library with over 12,000 volumes and 30 periodicals; 2 music and 2 art rooms as well as an enrichment room; a cafeteria; and a multi-purpose auditorium. The sports complex consists of 2 soccer fields; tennis, netball and basketball courts; an eight-lane 25 meter swimming pool; and a play-ground with recreational equipment for the Lower School. Student leadership is encouraged through the Student Council and Prefect system. All students wear a uniform which can be obtained from a local manufacturer. For further information, you may contact:

Dr. Hyacinth Hall (Director)

51 Upper Mark Way
Kingston 8,
Jamaica
Tel: (876) 925-1980
hyacinth@cwjamaica.com

A family interested in learning more about any one of the schools below should contact the CLO, who can furnish additional details about the schools in Jamaica:

Preparatory and High Schools

The Priory School:
Director (Temporary): Rudy Lawton
32 Hope Road
Kingston 10, Jamaica
Tel: (876) 926-4764

Immaculate Conception Preparatory and
High School for Girls:
Primary Headmistress: Sister Mary Murphy
Senior Headmistress: Sister Mary Catherine Aarons
152 Constant Spring Road
Kingston 8, Jamaica
Tel: (876) 925-2819 (Primary)

Campion College (High School)
Headmaster: John McKay
105 Hope Road
Kingston, Jamaica
Tel: (876) 927-9458

The Queens School (High School)
Principal, Mrs. Yvonne Keane-Dawes
8 Central Avenue
Kingston 8, Jamaica
Tel: (876) 924-6877

Preschools

Rainbow Land
Directors: Odette Khoury
Patricia Peralto
75 Shortwood Road
Kingston 8, Jamaica
Tel: (876) 925-2800

Building Blocks

Principal: Mrs. Nancy Baugh
5 East Avenue
Kingston 10, Jamaica
Tel: (876) 978-2314

First Steps Preschool
Co-Principals: Cynthia Hamilton
Michelle Wynter
63 Paddington Terrace
Kingston 6, Jamaica
Tel: (876) 927-3007, 978-8207,
978-6213

Learning Tree
Director: Carolyn Fox
34 Hopefield Avenue
Kingston 6, Jamaica
Tel: (876) 978-0064

Dependent Education

Away From Post Kingston has an away-from-post allowance for grades 7–12. In 1999, one student attended a boarding school in the U.S. If you are considering the “boarding school option,” contact the education counselor at the Family Liaison Office, Washington, for assistance in finding a boarding school. The Community Liaison Office at post has information on boarding schools used by Mission children at post. Some children have attended boarding schools in Florida to be close to the Mission; others have attended schools close to their home leave addresses to be near family in the U.S. CLO has videos and brochures from more than 12 boarding schools.

Special Educational Opportunities

The University of the West Indies has its largest campus in Kingston. It is a modern institution offering liberal arts, natural sciences, and medical training. Entrance requirements are at the level of 1 year of college in the U.S. It is possible to enroll in selected classes but difficult to enroll for a degree program.

The Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts includes the Schools of Dance, Drama, Art, and Music. Each offers programs for both adults and children. Many Mission children have been involved in various activities in the junior departments. More information is available from the CLO at post. Opportunities for learning languages such as French, German, and Spanish are available at the Alliance Française, the Jamaica- German Society, and the Institute of Bolivar Bello. Private tutors are also readily available.

A number of facilities exist in Kingston for educating the handicapped, although equipment and staff are limited. These schools have limited space, and each should be explored for specific needs. Day

programs are offered by the Jamaica Association for the Deaf, the Salvation Army School for the Blind, and the Mona Rehabilitation Center for the physically handicapped. Carberry Court Special School has day and boarding programs for the severely mentally handicapped. None of these programs meets U.S. standards. Mico Care Center offers a 9-week remedial program for those with multiple handicaps. The Jamaica Association for Children with Learning Disabilities is a resource facility for assisting children while in their regular school program. Those who have children requiring special instruction should notify CLO of their specific needs to obtain an up-to-date recommendation on how those needs can best be met.

Post Orientation Program

Newcomers are given a Welcome Kit containing information about the post and the country. Orientation programs for employees and adult dependents are held approximately twice per year. In addition, each employee is assigned a sponsor prior to arrival in Kingston. The sponsor assists the newcomer with settling in and getting acquainted. The Community Liaison Office will assist new arrivals in becoming familiar with local activities and will answer questions posed in pre-arrival correspondence.

Recreation and Social Life

Sports. Jamaicans are sports conscious. Chief sports are soccer, cricket, golf, tennis, swimming, sailing, and horseback riding. Smaller groups are active in squash, rugby, scuba diving, snorkeling, basketball, and softball. Local sports groups and clubs accept foreign nationals.

Bring all sports equipment to post, including a good supply of tennis balls if you play tennis. It is also advisable to bring all scuba gear and spare parts. Although scuba gear is available for rental, it can be purchased here at higher-than-U.S. prices. The Jamaica Sub-Aqua Club, a branch of the British Sub Aqua Club (BSAC), gives scuba diving lessons for a minimal fee. BSAC certification with the club is required to participate in club-sponsored dives, arranged every weekend. PADI certification can be obtained at the Buccaneer Scuba Club in Port Royal and through some of the north coast hotels.

Jamaica has virtually no continental shelf, and the drop off starts 200 yards from shore on the north coast. Scuba diving and snorkeling enthusiasts enjoy exploring the many networks of caves, canyons, and crevices. The Ocho Rios area has traditionally had one of the Caribbean's finest reef communities. Over 50 species of coral include giant pillar, lettuce, antler, star and rose cup, and stag-horn, as well as a wide variety of beautiful sponges and seaweed. Hurricane damage to the reefs in 1988 was extensive, particularly on the south side of the island. Sergeant majors, tangs, and peacock flounders are among the many fish species to be seen. The island has over 800 species of shells.

There is saltwater sport fishing for jack, blue marlin (record 600 lbs.), sailfish, kingfish, dolphin, tuna, barracuda, wahoo, tarpon, and snapper. Freshwater catches are snook, mullet, and others. Windsurfing is enjoyed at several north coast resorts. Waterskiing can be found in several places, especially at Blue Hole (Port Antonio) and Doctor's Cave (Montego Bay). For joggers and walkers,

the favorite spot to do laps is the Mona Reservoir: A 2- year entry pass can be obtained from the CLO for a cost of J300 (US\$9). Daily running is also possible at the Police Officers' Club in Kingston. Running on the streets is not recommended because of dogs, traffic, and crime.

Constant Spring Golf Club offers a challenging 18-hole course marked by hills and narrow fairways. The course is conveniently located in suburban St. Andrew close to Mission housing. Entrance fees are moderate as are annual dues. Greens fees are low. social membership entitles you to squash, badminton, tennis, and swimming. The initiation fee for social membership is moderate when compared with U.S. private club fees. The clubhouse has a newly renovated bar and lounge room and snack bar. The pool area has also been renovated. There are no playground facilities at the club. Caymanas Golf and Country Club is 12 miles from Kingston. Its facilities include a good 18 hole golf course and some tennis courts. Membership fees approximate those of the Constant Spring Club.

The Jamaica Golf Association (JGA) has a special arrangement for members of a Jamaican golf club. For a small annual fee, you may join JGA and play any course in Jamaica for about half price. There are 11 good golf courses on the island. Kingston's Liguanea Club has a swimming pool; lighted tennis, badminton, and squash courts; a restaurant and bar; and an exercise room. The club has several dances a year and is used for other events. A special golf membership is available at Liguanea for play at the Caymanas golf course.

The Royal Jamaica Yacht Club has facilities available for those interested in sailing, boating, and fishing. Social events are also held. The club is located near the international airport, and its large veranda affords a panoramic view of the harbor, Kingston, and the mountains. Entrance fees and annual dues are moderate. Anyone with a desire to "crew" on sailboats should join the club and meet the boat owners.

Physical fitness clubs and health spas are available. The Spartan Health Club, for instance, offers universal weightlifting equipment, aerobic exercise classes, steam room, and shower facilities. Future Fitness is a state-of-the-art facility housed in the Hilton Hotel. The air-conditioned facility offers aerobics as well as weight training, Stairmasters, bikes, and tread-mills. Kingston does not have extensive outdoor recreational opportunities for children. The Mission has a recreational facility at Bamboo Pen. Facilities include a swimming pool, tennis court, volleyball equipment, and playground. The American school is housed on this property. The city has a small zoo and botanical gardens where children can ride bikes or roller blade. Schools have limited playgrounds. Most families do not have sufficient space for bikes, except for tricycles. Children usually get their outdoor exercise in their own yards.

Many Jamaicans enroll their children in full-time nursery schools at the age of 2 or 3. Because of this, Americans find their own young children frequently lack playmates. Therefore, most families enroll young children in a nursery 5 days a week, at a reasonable cost. A number of nursery schools have proven more than satisfactory to Mission personnel. CLO has more detailed information on this subject.

There is little informal play between children of neighboring families in most neighborhoods in

Kingston, but families in townhouses usually find this is not a problem. Parents often schedule lessons or activities for the afternoons, especially for school-age children, since schools finish between 1:30 and 2:30 p. m. Tennis and golf lessons as well as piano, dance, and ballet lessons are popular. The Tae Kwon Do Club is enjoyed by all ages interested in self-defense.

Video cassette recorders provide a major form of entertainment for everyone, but especially for children. Most families have a VCR, and tape-swapping is frequent. Ship children's toys, art supplies, and books, since these items are not readily available locally, and prices are high. Items that will fit in the pouch can be ordered by mail and received in about 4 weeks. There are now two local TV stations that show local and U.S. television programs. Many families purchase equipment to hook up satellite reception. Cable is also readily available. Many people fly to Miami (US\$180–\$300 round trip) periodically to shop, especially at Christmas. Large items can be ordered through AKRA but will cost more and must be prearranged with the manager. Birthday parties are popular here, and a supply of gifts for your children to give is helpful.

Because summers are hot and humid, swimming is popular. Some families have homes with swimming pools, but beaches are some distance from Kingston. Bring water toys and two or three bathing suits per person (they wear out quickly). Children will want to play indoors in the heat of the day when they first arrive, especially in summer. A high chair, if needed, car seats, plastic cups and plates, and Thermos jugs for carrying drinks in the car should also be included. Check with the post for availability of a crib if you will need one.

Families with children in diapers should bring a large supply to post (6-9 month supply). Local prices are extremely high. You will be able to order them in bulk from AKRA, but receipt of an initial order can take up to a month and prices will also be high. AKRA usually has some diapers available, but the size varies.

Children will need to be familiarized with necessary security precautions in a low-key fashion. Houses are grilled and locked and have alarm systems and guards. All travel is by private car, and doors should be kept locked. As in any large city, certain sections of Kingston should be avoided.

Touring and Outdoor Activities

The most popular form of outdoor activity on the island is beach-going. The north coast of Jamaica has luxury resorts, hotels, and private villas every few miles. The off-season from mid-April to mid-December offers lower rates. Most resorts offer special Mission rates. Check with the CLO for the current rate list.

Bicycle riding is not recommended in Kingston because of erratic driving habits, potholes, and overzealous dogs. The University of the West Indies campus offers several miles of quiet, scenic roads for riders of all abilities and ages. There are several tour companies that offer bike excursions into the Blue Mountains. Bring a car rack, helmet, and rear-view mirror. Repairs are available, but spare parts are best ordered from U.S. supply houses.

Another popular outdoor activity is a weekend or day trip to Newcastle, a Jamaican Defense Force training center about an hour's drive from Kingston. At 4,000 feet, the weather can be quite cool so warmer clothes are advised. Hiking is a popular outdoor activity. Bird watching is popular, and over 250 species can be seen, including 25 found only in Jamaica. Resident species shared with neighboring countries are of special interest, since some have developed differences in behavior and appearance peculiar to Jamaica. Bring binoculars.

Garden clubs have regular outdoor shows. The Orchid Show is an annual event enjoyed by many.

Touring is popular. Kingston-area locales include historic sites at Port Royal, Castleton and Hope Botanical Gardens, the National Gallery, and the nearby Blue Mountains. Touring elsewhere is an easy day's drive from Kingston.

Negril, on the western end of the island, has 7 miles of white-sand beach and uninhibited simplicity. To the east of Negril along the north coast is Montego Bay, tourist capital of the island with its beaches, hotels, and attractions. The area includes several excellent golf courses and Rose Hall, Jamaica's most famous great house, which echoes with the mystery of Annie Palmer (the "White Witch"), its former mistress with a murky past. Nearby is Greenwood, once owned by the Barrett family whose best-known members were poet Elizabeth Barrett Browning and Sarah Barrett, "Pinkie" in Sir Thomas Lawrence's portrait.

Falmouth, despite its neglect, is a charming north coast port. It is still the best-preserved late 18th- and early 19th-century town on the island. The old Georgian buildings are worth a sightseeing tour.

The St. Ann's Bay/Discovery Bay/ Runaway Bay area, where Columbus landed in 1494, is another interesting locale. Columbus Park, Columbus Statue, and the ruins of the first Spanish settlement, Seville Nueva, are here. Visitors to the area can tour the caves near Runaway Bay, which the last Spanish governor of Jamaica used as a safe haven while fleeing the British. Discovery Bay is the home of the University of the West Indies Marine Lab.

Ocho Rios is the resort area for the central north coast. The offshore reefs are among the finest in the Caribbean. Just south of Ocho Rios is Fern Gully, a rain forest where the road twists through a ravine. Also in the area is Jamaica's leading tourist site, Dunn's River Falls. Brimmer Hall Plantation (coconut and bananas) and Prospect Estate (pimento, citrus, and cattle) offer tours.

On the northeast coast near Port Maria is "Firefly," former home of Noel Coward. "Golden Eye," once home of James Bond's creator, Ian Fleming, is in Oracabessa. Port Antonio, once vacation home of actor Errol Flynn, is considered Jamaica's most beautiful port and is the sport fishing capital of the island. The beauty of the area, the beaches, rafting on the Rio Grande River, Blue Hole (the world's largest natural swimming pool), Folly (ruins) built by an American millionaire for his love, Nunsuch Caves, Somerset Falls, and Maroon "jerk" pork and chicken still attract many visitors to its hotels and villas. The trip back to Kingston along the coastal road to the east of Port Antonio is rewarding. Beautiful coastal scenes, extensive coconut and banana plantations, the John Crow

Mountains, and interesting villages provide a pleasant break from tourist areas.

A 424-mile primary highway circles the island and several highways cross the mountainous interior from north to south. The two main north-south roads used to cross the center of the island from Kingston are also interesting. A third, mostly paved road runs between Kingston and Buff Bay via Newcastle (41 miles). It is a narrow road through small villages and over Hardware Gap, the highest point on the primary road net, offering beautiful scenery. From Kingston to Annotto Bay (28 miles), a good but narrow road winds through the mountains. Along the way is Castleton Botanical Gardens, founded in 1862. These lovely gardens were severely damaged by the 1988 hurricane but have been restored. They provide a good setting for weekend picnic outings.

The other road crossing the island from Kingston begins by going west. It passes the Arawak Museum at White Marl, Caymanas race track, and Spanish Town, the old capital. Spanish Town is unique among Jamaican cities and has the longest history of settlement (1534) plus the finest collection of historic buildings and monuments on the island. It is also home of the National Archives. From Spanish Town, the road winds its way north through the canyon of the Cobre River, across the narrow Flat Bridge, past Bog Walk, Linstead, and Ewarton (Alcan alumina plant), and over Mount Diablo (2,250 feet). At Moneague, where three small lakes periodically appear, the road branches to the left to St. Ann's Bay or to the right through Fern Gully to Ocho Rios.

Because of reasonable air fares and the proximity to Miami, Cayman Islands, and Haiti, it is easy to take trips out of Jamaica.

Entertainment

Three walk-in theaters are frequented by Americans. Several theaters offer a selection of stage presentations: drama, reviews, variety, musicals, and pantomime. Kingston also has several active dance theater movements, the Jamaica Philharmonic, and several choral groups.

The island has several fine museums. The Institute of Jamaica has general displays. The Arawak Museum near Spanish Town and the Port Royal Museum with buildings and collections of relics of the Buccaneer heyday are all within the Kingston area. The National Gallery of Art (downtown) and several smaller art galleries have excellent collections of Jamaican art. Regular exhibits of paintings, sculpture, ceramics, and native crafts are held in Kingston.

There are many colorful activities that are interesting to newcomers, including Jonkanoo dancing, a curious type of costumed, masked folk dancing of African origin that is seen during the Christmas season. Carnival is a popular event, celebrated the week after Easter with both adult and children's carnivals.

"Eating Jamaican" is not to be missed. Two popular dishes are ackee with saltfish and rice with peas (beans). Other specialties include curried goat, fricasseed chicken, escovitched fish, Port Royal's fried fish and bammy, jerk pork, jerk chicken, soups such as pepperpot and pumpkin, and gungo peas. Desserts such as sweet potato puddings, plantain tart, bulla, gizada, cut cakes, and grater cakes are popular. Kingston has good restaurants offering Jamaican, British, Chinese, American, Indian,

French, and Italian cuisine. Most restaurants are moderately priced compared to the U.S.

Social Activities

The American Women's Group is a social club for all American women. It has monthly programs and activity groups. The American community, through various sponsors, celebrates our holidays—Christmas, Fourth of July, and Halloween—in traditional fashion. Mission entertaining is done in private homes, generally in small groups.

Americans have opportunities to meet members of the foreign community. Because of scattered housing, all personnel live within Jamaican or international neighborhoods. There are several active international groups such as the Diplomatic Association of Jamaica, the Consular Corps, International Proxy Parents and the Rotary Club.

Official Functions

Senior Embassy officers are invited to the usual range of social and diplomatic functions. Official, social, and diplomatic obligations for junior officers are infrequent. Senior officers may wish to bring evening wear such as tuxedos and formal gowns for the annual Marine Ball.

Standards of Social Conduct

You are expected to participate in local functions as much as possible and to further develop U.S. national interests. It is suggested that officers bring calling cards—150 cards are adequate for 1 year for most staff members, while senior officers will need twice that number. Engraving is available in Kingston.

Special Information

The Embassy provides limited facilitative services for non-Foreign Service personnel on assignment for the Department of State and other agencies, including military personnel. These services, depending on the nature of the visitor's assignment, include hotel reservations, confirmation of airline tickets, local transportation bookings, and other assistance.

Notes for Travelers

Getting to Post

Kingston is reached by flights via Miami, New York, and several Caribbean Islands. You are met by your Embassy sponsor at Norman Manley International Airport, Provided your firm ETA is received prior to arrival. Depending on availability, you will be taken to temporary lodging facilities (either hotel or transient apartments). Your sponsor will bring you to the Embassy Personnel Office at 8:00 a. m. on the first workday following arrival for assistance and advice in post procedures. All new employees and/or families should report to the Marine Security Guard desk on the third floor, as all offices of the Embassy, DAO, and DEA are accessible only from this point. Airfreight

from the U.S. east coast usually arrives in 10-20 days; surface freight takes 4-8 weeks. Surface shipments for military personnel often take longer, so choose airfreight items carefully to include all necessary “settling-in” items.

Customs, Duties, and Passage

Only personnel with full diplomatic status are entitled to free entry of personal articles, whether on first arrival, during stay, or on reentry after leave. Other categories have 6 months from date of arrival to import duty free into the country. No entry, free or otherwise, is permitted for rum, fresh fruits and vegetables, or fresh meat. Canned and frozen/processed meats may be imported. Import prohibitions are not imposed on imports of American Embassy employees unless they wish to sell an imported article locally. Duty is then assessed at the time of sale. Cars on the island for at least 3 years may be sold without payment of duty. Diplomats may apply for duty-free privileges for a second car for spouses. Cars should not be shipped to Jamaica without prior approval from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (through the Embassy).

Passage

Those arriving from areas where yellow fever is known to exist must be immunized. All persons, including U.S. Government employees, assigned to Jamaica or coming to Jamaica to work must have a Jamaican visa on arrival. Only tourists visiting the island exclusively for pleasure are exempt from this requirement, although proof of U.S. citizenship is required (a certified birth certificate, passport, or naturalization certificate).

Pets

With the single exception of animals born and bred in the U.K., which have never had rabies shots or left the country, importation of pets is not allowed. No waivers or relaxation of this rule can be obtained for any category of personnel. To bring animals from the U.K., the following procedure must be taken. You must have a certificate from the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Food at Hookrise, Surrey, England, proving that the animal was born and bred in the U.K. This certificate must then be presented to the Veterinary Department at Hope Gardens in Kingston to receive an import permit. These steps must be taken before the animal arrives.

Many Mission personnel have watch dogs. These are readily obtainable on the island. Pedigreed dog breeding is popular in Jamaica, and a number of breeds are available. Long- and short-haired cats, birds, guinea pigs, and other household pets are available at little cost. Several excellent veterinarians practice in Kingston. No problems exist in exporting animals at the end of a tour.

Firearms and Ammunition

The Chief of Mission must authorize an employee to bear firearms. Such permission is normally granted only to those employees whose official duties establish a clear need to carry firearms. Exceptions to this policy will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Mission policy discourages employees from keeping personal weapons. The Chief of Mission, in coordination with the regional

security officer, however, will consider requests to purchase or import a weapon. Only one handgun or shotgun per family will be approved. Rifles, automatic weapons, and handguns with calibers larger than . 38/9mm will not be approved for importation. Department of State pouch facilities may not be used for the importation of firearms or ammunition. All U.S. Government employees who wish to import a firearm must complete all of the following procedures: Prior to arrival on assignment at Embassy Kingston, submit a written request by cable or letter through the regional security officer to the Chief of Mission to import a firearm. The request must describe the make, model, type of weapon, caliber, and serial number. The regional security officer will communicate the Chief of Mission's decision by letter or cable.

Personnel are permitted to ship personal weapons in household effects surface shipments only (the regional security officer's cable or letter of authorization will explain procedures for the shipment of official weapons). After arriving at post, the employee is to visit the regional security officer's office as soon as possible to fill out and start the processing of Jamaican documentation to receive a permit for a weapon. All employees possessing a firearm must be proficient in the safe handling, use, and storage of weapons. The Mission will not provide training for personally owned weapons. The Mission accepts no liability for the misuse of personal firearms.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

The currency is the Jamaican dollar. Bills are printed on different-colored paper in denominations of \$10, \$20, \$50, \$100, and \$500 while coins are minted in denominations of 10¢, 25¢, \$1, \$5 and \$10. The official exchange rate fluctuates. As of January 2000, it was US\$1 = J\$41. The exact exchange rate at any given time may be obtained from the Jamaica desk in WHA. With the exception of gasoline, which is sold by liter, all other units of measure (inches, feet, yards, miles, etc.) and weight (pounds and ounces) are the same as in the U.S. However, Jamaica is on the metric system. Road signs and consumer product labels already reflect these changes.

Taxes, Exchange, and Sale of Property

Restrictions U.S. dollars or travelers checks may be converted readily into Jamaican currency at airports, banks, and hotels. While some north coast resorts will accept U.S. dollars, all official transactions must be made in Jamaican currency.

Personal property must be imported solely for one's own use while in Jamaica. Such property may only be sold to persons with duty-free privileges unless: all local duties, levies, or taxes have been paid; and all local regulations have been complied with. Duty-free items obtained locally through the commissary facilities may not be sold except to U.S. Government personnel.

Facilities

U.S. dollar checks can be cashed into local currency at National Commercial Bank located on the ground floor of the Chancery building. The USAID cashier will also cash U.S. dollar checks for Mission employees during established hours. For paying local bills, it may be convenient to establish a local checking account.

American employees are paid by RAMC (Regional Administrative Management Center) located in South Carolina. Checks are either mailed to post or deposited by electronic funds transfer to your U.S. checking account. You may buy U.S. dollar instruments, including travelers checks, from local banks.

Recommended Reading

Abrahams, Roger D. *The Man-of-Words in the West Indies: Performance and the Emergence of Creole Culture*.

Alleyne, Mervyn C. *Roots of Jamaican Culture*. 1988

Apa Productions. *Insight Guide to Jamaica*.

Barrett, Leonard E. Sr. *The Rastafarians*. 1988

Bayer, Marcel. *Jamaica in Focus: A Guide to the People, Politics and Culture*. 1993

Black, Clinton V. *The Story of Jamaica*. Rev. 1965

Blake, Evon. *Beautiful Jamaica*. 1975

Campbell, Mavis C. *The Maroons of Jamaica: a history of resistance, collaboration and betrayal*. 1988

Cargill, Morris. *Jamaica Farewell*. 1977

Chang, Brian and Wayne Chen. *Reggae Roots: Story of Jamaican Popular Music*. 1996

Clarke, Edith. *My Mother Who Fathered Me*. 1957

Gordon, Shirley C. *God Almighty Make Me Free: Christianity in Pre-emancipation Jamaica*. 1996

Gunst, Laurie. *Born Fi' Dead: A Journey Through the Jamaican Posse Underworld*. 1996

Henriques, Fernando. *Family & Color in Jamaica*. 1953

Henzel, Perry. *The Power Game*. 1983

Heuman, Gad. *'The Killing Time': The Morant Bay Rebellion in Jamaica*. 1994

Holt, Thomas Cleveland. *The Problem of Freedom: race labor, and politics in Jamaica and Britain, 1932-1938*. 1992

James, CLR. *Beyond a Boundary*.

- Kaplan, Irving. *Area Handbook for Jamaica*. 1976
- Kaplan, John. *Marijuana - The New Prohibition*. 1970
- Keith, Nelson W. *The Social Origins of Democratic Socialism in Jamaica*. 1992
- Knight, Franklin W., ed. *The Slave Societies of the Caribbean*. 1997
- Knight, Franklin W. *The Caribbean*, 2nd ed. 1990
- Lowenthal & Comitas. *Consequences of Class & Color*. 1973
- Lowenthal & Comitas. *Work and Family*. 1967
- Mikes, George. *Not by Sun Alone*. 1967
- Mullin, Michael. *Africa in America: Slave acculturation and resistance in the American South and the British Caribbean, 1763-1831*. 1992
- Nettleford, Rex. *Mirror, Mirror - Identity, Race and Protest in Jamaica*. 1970
- Nettleford, Rex. *Caribbean Cultural Identity: The Case of Jamaica*. 1979
- Payne, Anthony. *Politics in Jamaica*. 1995
- Sherlock, P. M. *This is Jamaica: An Informal Guide*. 1968
- Sherlock, Philip and Hazel Bennett. *Story of the Jamaican People*. 1996
- Slater, Mary. *The Caribbean Islands*. 1968
- Thelwell. *The Harder They Come*.
- White, Timothy. *Catch a Fire: The Life of Bob Marley*. 1983
- Ward J. *British West Indian Slavery, 1750-1830: The Process of Amelioration*. 1988
- Mission personnel. The Overseas Briefing Center has available a color-slide presentation on Jamaica prepared by CLO/Kingston, as well as up-to-date information about the post.

Local Holidays

The Embassy observes the following Jamaican holidays:

New Year's Day	January 1
Ash Wednesday	February/March*

Good Friday	March/April*
Easter Monday	March/April*
National Labor Day	May 23
Independence Day	August* (First Monday in August)
National Heroes Day	October* (Third Monday in October)
Christmas Day	December 25
Boxing Day	December 26

*Movable holidays

OFFICE OF OVERSEAS SCHOOLS AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF KINGSTON

c/o American Embassy Kingston
 Department of State
 Washington, DC 20521-3210
 Tel: 809-977-3625
 Fax: 809-977-3625
 E-mail: AISK@INFOCHAN.COM
1996-97

The **American International School of Kingston**, founded in 1994, is a private, coeducational school which offers an educational program from pre-kindergarten through grade 12 for students of all nationalities. The school year comprises three semesters extending from September until the end of June.

Organization: The School is governed by a 9-member Board of Directors, 8 of whom are elected for 2-year terms by the Association of the American International School of Kingston and 1 ex-officio member (U.S. Ambassador or his/her designee). Membership in the Association is automatically conferred on the parents or guardians of the children enrolled in the school.

Curriculum: The curriculum is that of a U.S. college-preparatory public school. Instruction is in English. It is expected that almost all graduates will go on to colleges and universities in the United States, Europe, Asia, and Jamaica. The School has a foreign languages program for PK through grade 12. The School offers special education services for learning disabilities, reading problems, and English-as-a-Second-Language.

Faculty: There are 12 full-time and 7 part-time faculty members in the 1996-97 school year, including 5 U.S. citizens, 7 host-country nationals, and 7 persons of other nationalities.

Enrollment: Enrollment at the beginning of the 1996-97 school year was 78. Of the total, 20 were U.S. citizens, 9 were host-country nationals and 49 were children of other nationalities. Of the U.S. enrollment, 9 were dependents of U.S. government direct-hire or contract employees and 11 of private U.S. citizens.

Facilities: The School has 10 classrooms, two libraries, one art studio, one science laboratory, one resource room, one music room, two computer rooms, administrative offices, and sports facilities.

Finances: In the 1996-97 school year, almost all income derives from regular tuition. Annual tuition rates are as follows: PK: \$3,500; K. to grade 6: \$5,800; and grades 7-12: \$6,000. There is a registration fee of \$1,500 payable on first enrollment in the School. These fees are payable in U.S. dollars.

This Fact Sheet is intended to provide general information. The Office of Overseas Schools (A/OPR/OS) may have more detailed information. Prospective users of the schools may wish to inquire further of A/OPR/OS or contact the school directly for more specific and up-to-the minute information regarding curriculum programs and the like.

Information and statistics provided by the School

OFFICE OF OVERSEAS SCHOOLS

THE PRIORY SCHOOL

32 Hope Road
Kingston 10, Jamaica
Tel: 809-926-6636
Fax: 809-926-7383

1996-97

The Priory School is a private, coeducational day school which offers an educational program from pre kindergarten through grade 13 for students of all nationalities. The School was founded in 1944. The school year comprises three terms extending approximately from early September to mid-December, early January to late March, and early April to late June. The School also has an adult education program.

Organization: The School is governed by a 12-member Council nominated annually by the Priory School Trust Society Limited, the trusteeship of the School. It is recognized by the Ministry of Education in Jamaica

Curriculum: The curriculum is similar to that of a U.S. general academic, college-preparatory public school. The kindergarten department offers an eclectic blend of Montessori, Dewey, and Froebel methodologies. The junior school delivers individualized instruction and testing (Test of Academic Perception, TAP), catering to children with special needs as well as the gifted. Curriculum support is offered by specialists in French, Spanish, physical education, guidance and counseling, library, music, dance, and art. The high school is divided into the 7th to 11th grades. There is a general track for the average student, an advanced track for the gifted student, and a special needs track for students who have learning disabilities. The curriculum includes ESL, American history, Caribbean studies, and a vibrant computer program (Future Kids). Grades 12 and 13 attract the best students from local high schools in a pre-university program, with preparation for the Advanced Level and AP programs. The School is fully accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. It is also recognized by the University of Cambridge for GCE Ordinary and Advanced Level exams, and by the Caribbean Examination Council.

Faculty: There are 42 full-time and 7 part-time faculty members in the 1996-97 school year, including 2 U.S. citizens, 45 Jamaicans, and 2 persons of other nationalities.

Enrollment: Enrollment at the beginning of the 1996-97 school year was 368. Of the total, 55 were

U.S. citizens, 256 were host-country nationals, and 57 were children of other nationalities.

Facilities: Most administrative offices are located on the first floor of the building. There are 40 classrooms including a music room and 3 science laboratories. There is a library, an audio-visual center, a senior study hall, a student activity center, and a hall with a viewing gallery. There is also the kindergarten block and 9 acres of playing fields.

Finances: In the 1996-97 school year, the School's income derives mainly from tuition. Annual tuition rates are as follows: PK-Kdg.: \$850; grades 1-6: \$1,160; grades 7-9: \$1,410; and grades 10-13: \$1,680. (All fees are quoted in U.S. dollars.)